I propose that Registration clerks be placed on a par with the clerks in other Departments.

President.—The question before the House is "*not to give effect to the recommendations of the Special Finance Committee to treat clerks in the Registry Offices excepting the Head clerk as only copyists, and that these clerks be put on the same scale as the clerks of the other Departments.*"

Question put and agreed to.

Menials and Servants.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I move that "*the minimum pay of the menials and servants be not less than Rs. 15.*" In moving so, I am aware of the fact that the consensus of our opinion—our Party—is for fixing the same at a little less. That is because my Party will accept only Rs. 12. I am going to appeal for individual opinion in support of my proposition and give my proposition due consideration after hearing my remarks.

If the House does not accept this, the other problem may be accepted. There is no bar to rise a little more in generosity and give Rs. 3 more. I beg for the opinion of the Members individually to vote for the rupees fifteen proposition.

President.—What is the recommendation of the Finance Committee?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—Rs. 9.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Sir, every one is willing to pay a man living in Cochin 8 as. a day. A cooly working in any estate, a cooly working in any of the roads gets more than eight annas a day. I cannot get coolies to work in my *paramba* for not less than ten or twelve annas.

Mr. C. Barton Wright.—I pay five annas for a cooly.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Five annas! five annas! indeed, a very good cooly. Any way, Sir, for serving a Government at eight annas a day, I submit no Government in these days of hardship grudge to pay a man less than Rs. 15. Sir, a fifteen rupees peon has his full time engaged by the Government. There may be some depending on him. You may take their earnings also into consideration. What are their earnings? By a calculation in the dissenting note of Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja the income per head in Cochin State is put down at one anna 5 pies a day. With that nobody can live. Now, therefore, even if the peon's pay is supplemented by the little income, his dependants may earn; I say they have not sufficient for them to live with bare two meals a day. The cost of living for a day is four annas five pies per head, but here how this man with his wife and two children (I am taking only two children, there may be many for other persons) can live on this I cannot understand. They contribute to the population of the State, and for these people to be

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paid less than 8 annas a day would be a cruel thing. Everybody is willing to pay 8 annas for the public peon. No distinction is to be drawn with a man doing intellectual work and a man like a peon doing bodily work. A man doing bodily work must be fed with little more food; otherwise he will not be able to serve. Now, Sir, see what the attitude of the Government will be. Government is very generous indeed and could be generous! It is not anybody's money because it is people's money. Sir, let us see the financial commitment to the Government. A reason may be urged that this huge sum cannot be found by the Government or the House by the ordinary means of taxation. I have gone deeply into the figures and I can put it in a nutshell. On page 41 of the report the list of people who draw less than Rs. 15 is given. Police constables, Excise peons, Nair Brigade sepoys—1286. Inferior servants, peons, etc., 1855. Proposed hands 1,213 plus 1,731. Now, Sir, if you calculate Rs. 15 for these two classes together, the pay would be only over what is paid now Rs. 95,318 more. If you give effect to the proposition the whole commitment to the Government in an year will be only Rs. 96,318 more. Can you not distribute one lakh of rupees between three thousand and odd people to engender satisfaction amidst your subordinate servants? This is the commitment after all, and I do not think that this House regrets in granting a lakh of rupees to be distributed among the miserable poor servants of the State.

As the Hon'ble Member for Trippunittura has said, there are only a very few people in Cochin and Ernakulam who live one foot above the ground. These people are in the mire—are in a level with the ground. They have the rain coming through the unthatched roof. I see, I do not think that there is any Member here without a conscience who, for the poor, will deny this lakh.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—How will it be 96,318? You say that there are three thousand and odd servants and increase three rupees per head per mensem. A simple calculation will show that one lakh and 8 thousand is required.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I have made the following calculation, and here it is, you can see. There are on the whole 3,000 servants and calculating at Rs. 12 a month it will come to 18,195. And that multiplied by 12 for one year will come to 2,18,340. At present the budget for the year, the proposed scale, is Rs. 1,99,104. If would take their figure from the first figure you get 19,236. And if you take that from the other figure you get the difference to be 96,318 exact.

Mr. A. S. Harihara Ayyar.—You are right. Mr. Salem is right. The matter is simple. The average is given in the last column to be Rs. 164 and Rs. 135. If you add it gives

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Rs. 300. Half of it Rs. 150. 12 into 12 is 144. So there is an excess of Rs. 6. For all these three thousand it comes to six. Out of a lakh and 18 thousand you subtract this and that is 96,000 rupees.

The House rose for lunch at 1-56 p. m. and re-assembled at 3 p. m. with the Deputy President in the Chair.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—The Diwan Peishkar of the State, than whom we have not any officer of so much experience with these poorer classes, has put the case in a nutshell on page 83 of his recommendations. There he has given in para 18, sub-para 9, that on the whole the increased provision required for the improvement of the pay and prospects of the lower ranks of our services on the lines proposed in the main report and modified as indicated above may be brought within a lakh of rupees. Now he has put it at 10. We have got the calculation in that paragraph. Under items 4 and 5 referring to Police constables, Jail warders, Excise peons and Nayar Brigade sepoys the increase would be Rs. 3,720. Inferior servants, peons, &c., the increase would be Rs. 32,367. Taking both these items together you have got Rs. 36,000. Speaking in round numbers—a little more than Rs. 36,000.

Now, Sir, I put the proposition in a nutshell and wind up. We have roughly 3,000 menial servants of these lower ranks whom I am compelled to give Rs. 15. According to the revision proposed by the Diwan Peishkar you have to give Rs. 36,000 more and according to the revision that I propose at Rs. 15 you have to pay these 3,000 people. If you pay at 15 you will have to pay about Rs. 96,000 more. Taking Rs. 36,000 from this Rs. 96,000 the additional commitment that I ask this House to pay thus comes only to Rs. 60,000. Again that figure stands incontrovertible. If nevertheless this House is not willing, I am willing to amend my proposition myself to say "please pay these people from 12 to 15 making 12 as the minimum." That, my Party has agreed. Out of deference to the wishes of my Party I can only carry the best for them, the best for those poor people. If the House is not willing to give Rs. 15, let the House be pleased to give them Rs. 12 rising to Rs. 15. That takes me out of any controversies with my Party, every year one rupee increment. I don't mind. I am for the other Rs. 15. But I am agreeable to the figure between Rs. 12 and 15. My proposition is to pay them all Rs. 15 and we want Rs. 60,000 more. That is my individual proposition. If that proposition is not acceptable to the House, I shall agree to pay them Rs. 12 to 15.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—That proposition should be separately put to the votes.

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Dr. A. R. Menon.—What is it that he wants?

Mr. P. Krishna Menon.— We are concerned with the minimum only now.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I would put Rs. 15. That is the least. I will put it at Rs. 15. I will vote for the other. At Rs. 15 the extra cost to the Government of Cochin is only Rs. 60,000 more in a year according to the proposals now before the House, not a pie more. I stand upon that Rs. 15. That if Rs. 60,000 is given to 3,000 homes, you will make it happier for them to live. For this change of Rs. 15, I am speaking, and if that is not acceptable to the House, I have discharged my duty to them and I sit down. Sir, one fact more. If you take the actual figures,....

Dr. A. R. Menon.—On a point of order. I say on that point the Hon'ble Member has taken more than 5 minutes

Deputy President.—Only 10 minutes to the mover and 5 minutes to the other Members.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I should be very glad. I shall say what I have to say in five minutes. I have nothing more to say. The commitment of the House by giving Rs. 30,000, according to the proposals of the Special Finance Committee, will be only Rs. 60,000 extra, and I ask this House to accept that Rs. 60,000 burden.

Deputy President.—Anybody to second that resolution?

There was nobody to second the resolution, and hence it was lost.

Mr. E Ikkanda Warriar.—Sir, with the permission of the Chair, I move that "*the minimum pay of the Government servants should be Rs. 12.*" This motion has been accepted by the Party and I will move it as a Party motion.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—I second that proposition.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—I wish to move an amendment to that.

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—Resolution number ?

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—No number.

The minimum pay of any man employed as full-timed officer should be Rs. 12.

Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon.—I want the exact wording, Sir.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—"*This Council recommends that the minimum pay of any man in Government service be Rs. 12*"

Dr. A. R. Menon.—I beg to move another proposition without notice as we can dispense with notice, "*That 12 Rs. should be the lowest pay that the menial staff should be given, and that in 10 years the pay should be gradually increased to Rs. 15 at least.*"

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—This resolution has not been put.

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Dr. A. R. Menon.—This is a separate proposition. I cannot couple this with the former.

Deputy President.—Anybody to support or second ?

Mr. A. S. Harihara Ayyar.—I second the second proposition.

Mr. M. A. Chakko.—First, this proposition should be put and carried, and then the other proposition.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—My motion may be taken after this. I don't move it as an amendment. I shall be bringing a fresh proposition.

Deputy President.—Anybody to oppose this proposition?

Mr. C. Barton Wright.—May I say a few words, Sir?

Deputy President.—Yes.

Mr. C. Barton Wright.—May I remain seated, Sir ?

Deputy President.—Yes.

Mr. C. Barton Wright.—Sir, the opinion is unanimous both in the Council and among the public outside that adequate provision should be made to improve the lot of the low-paid subordinate officers and menials of the State. It is admitted that the prices for the necessaries of life have almost doubled within the last decade and that these poorly paid people have been struggling for years to try and make both ends meet. The Government, a few years ago, gave a scarcity allowance to the subordinate staff, but it was subsequently withdrawn on a promise of reorganising and increasing their pay. A good number of years have lapsed since then, and the Government has done nothing to fulfil its promise and redress a just grievance, and in consequence up to this time unfortunate families have been eking out a miserable existence. (*Hear, hear.*) Now that the Finance Committee has submitted its report, it is to be hoped that the Government will do them justice by giving them a *living wage.*

The proposals in the majority report for the improvement in pay and prospects of the lower ranks of our services are, on the whole, generous. But they are not quite adequate in the case of some; and so, I would suggest the following few modifications.

All peons may be put on one uniform time-scale of Rs. 10 to 15, instead of the two grades Rs. 10 to Rs. 12 and Rs. 12 to 14 as proposed. Similarly all masapidies who are full-time employees may be paid Rs. 10. I agree with the Diwan Peishkar that there is no necessity for a Rs. 9 lower grade. I would also propose a minimum of Rs. 20 to the primary school teachers.

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Mr. A. B. Salem.—These propositions are coming separately. This minimum may be put to the votes.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—That proposition may be voted.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—The proposition now before the House is Mr. Warriar's proposition.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—You can reserve it for another time.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—My motion is discussed. So this may be put to the vote.

Deputy President.—Nobody will be disinclined to pay Rs. 12 to Rs. 15, if funds are forthcoming. It is not our look-out for funds. I don't know whether the Government will pass it.

Mr. C. Barton Wright.—May I say a word? I am agreeable to Rs. 12 to Rs. 15. I changed my mind. From 10 I make it 12.

Mr. P. Krishna Menon.—So you can vote for this proposition.

The question of fixing the minimum pay of Government servants at Rs. 12 was put and agreed to the officials remaining neutral.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Unanimously carried.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Government servants remaining neutral may be noted

Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon.—The officials are not taking part in any voting.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—This will obviate the necessity for calling a poll.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Unless it be so recorded, we shall have to call for a poll. Some of the nominated Members are officials.

Deputy President.—In the Council they are non-official Members.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I don't know how it can be ruled that they are non-official Members.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—All except Government Members.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—I wish to move my proposition, and I want only to say this much. There is a general belief that in the Special Finance Committee the official Members were not in favour of giving any increase. They were as anxious as we are to make any possible increment, and it is only when we found out that the sum comes to a very large sum that we had a reasonable fear that the Government may not be able to carry out the proposal and, therefore, altered suggestions were made and deductions were also effected. Now, if it is possible, you

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would be only too glad to make a medium, as the Member for the Jews suggested. But barring that, we would like to place before the House the next resolution. The object of this proposition is that almost all these menials, when they retire, may at least be able to get 7½ rupees as pension. And it came to me as a great shock the other day when I found out that the menials were not given their 50 per cent as pension. A man drawing Rs. 15 according to the present rules will not get half his pay as pension, whereas a man drawing Rs. 1,000 will be able to get Rs. 500. It is in order to obviate this inequality and iniquity that we suggested that the same principles pertaining to the case of the higher officials should be introduced in the case of the menials, and in addition to that, also the Provident Fund. Now, if by any chance they cannot get any promotion, at least they have the consolation that within 10 years they will get their full pay of Rs. 15. And after putting in 30 years' honest service, they may go back and get 4 annas per day. It is only for this purpose that I introduced this modification and this resolution. I hope the House will find its way to accept this resolution, seeing that the expenditure involved in these proposals will be much less than the one, in the case of the resolution introduced by the Member for the Jews. That is all what I have to say.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Increase in how many years?

K. Mohamed Seethi.—I beg to second it.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—The Trichur Agent of the Imperial Bank of India once said within my hearing that the Imperial Bank does not believe in peons on less than Rs. 14 a month and clerks on Rs. 30. I wish that our benign Government takes a leaf from the Imperial Bank in this respect. In these costly days of living, it will be impossible for one to keep his body and soul together, leading an honest life at the same time, on anything less than eight annas a day or Rs. 15 a month. Half a dozen years ago, ordinary coolies working on 3 annas a day now refuse to work on anything less than 6 annas a day. But has the pay of the menials in Government service been increased to any appreciable extent? Everywhere outside Government circles wages for work, whatever be the nature of the work, have been increased, and unless Government also moves forward in the matter, I utter a serious warning that ere long only those who are unfit to earn a living wage will come to enter Government Service and thus the efficiency of administration is sure to suffer.

I have yet another reason to fix the figure at Rs. 15. When one retires after a life-long service in Government, he must get at least 4 annas a day to keep his body and soul together. It is

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only a monthly salary of Rs. 15 that will entitle him to a pension of 4 annas a day. By all means reduce the number of menial officers as much as you can but give them a good living wage.

In page 17 of the report the Special Finance Committee has said as follows considering the revision of pay of the lowest paid subordinates:—

"It means only that impulsive generosity should not blind us to our financial commitments". It is indeed surprising that the generosity of the Members came into clash with the financial condition of the State only when they took up for consideration the question of increasing the pay of inferior officers in service. There is no limit to man's ambitions, and whatever may be the pay that you give to a person, he wants something more; his expenditure increases with his income. But there is a limit below which it will be impossible for a person to lead an honest life. Bearing this in mind we must limit the pay of the superior officers consistent with the financial condition of the State rather than brush away the case of the inferior officers under the plea that finances don't permit. Moreover the plea of want of funds will not stand. No income-tax, no new additional taxation will be necessary, if only the rules regarding appointments and increments are strictly followed by Government. When a vacancy occurs on, say, Rs. 300 to 400, why should the Government give the maximum of Rs. 400 on starting? If the Government accept the principle of sending away all their superannuated officers, new men who take their places will naturally start on the minimum, and the result will be a considerable saving, which can well be utilised for bettering the condition of the starving subordinates in the lower ranks. The plea of want of funds wil not stand. The highly paid will take care of themselves and it is only the poor that needs our help. So I request this House to vote for this resolution.

Deputy President.—Anybody else desiring to speak on the point? Pay to be raised from Rs. 12 to 15 in how many years?

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—In ten years.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Half the pension also.

Deputy President.—That is a further question. Have you got a copy of your proposition?

Dr. A. R. Menon.—I shall write it down if you like and send it.

Deputy President.—When there is no opposition, why should we put the question to the votes?

The resolution that the minimum pay of Government servants should be Rs. 12 rising to Rs. 15 in 10 years was agreed to.

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Deputy President.—Any more in connection with this ?

Teachers.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Sir, I wish to move that *"This Council recommends to the Government that the minimum pay of teachers of the Education Department be Rs. 20."*

Deputy President.—Is that the next subject in the order?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—It comes in there.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I have a suggestion to make that the question of the low paid subordinates may be fully disposed off, because there is the question of Provident Fund, and there is the question of State Life Insurance.

Deputy President.—I shall follow the order of the report.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—That is what is being done now.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—As regards pay, it is in paragraph 43.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—" Additional privileges to inferior servants " in para 44. Under that comes " full pension, &c.,"

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—We have got various things before that. We are putting the things in the order.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—But we have not finished the whole of 43—pay of inferior officers and servants.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I have no objection, if 43 is to be exhausted. What has been suggested is under 43, 'pay of inferior officers and servants'. We have finished 'servants '. Under 'inferior officers' that shall be considered, and we shall come to the additional privileges.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—I don t wish to make a long speech on this matter. The teachers' minimum pay should be raised to Rs. 20. The Party has considered this question, and they have adopted this as a Party question. I don't think anybody would deny that the persons to whom our young children are entrusted should be persons on right lines.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I second it.

Mrs. G. Pavitran.—I support that resolution.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—The question may be put.

Deputy President.—In the case of passed hands or unpassed hands ?

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—It must apply to Vernacular as well as Anglo-vernacular teachers whether passed or unpassed without any difference.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—If they are teachers, they must be given. It is the Department's lookout to give proper teachers.

The motion that the minimum pay of teachers should be Rs. 20 was put and agreed to.

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